

NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

INFORMATION AT A GLANCE

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Undergraduate Scholarship Program offers scholarship awards to students from disadvantaged backgrounds who are committed to careers in biomedical, behavioral and social science health-related research. The program is sponsored by the NIH, one of the world's foremost centers for biomedical research and research training.

The scholarships pay for tuition and reasonable educational and living expenses up to \$20,000 per academic year. In return, recipients are obligated to serve as paid employees in NIH research laboratories during the summer and after graduation. In addition to financial assistance, the scholarship program offers invaluable training and mentoring, as well as practical experience in a state-of-the-art research setting.

Why are these scholarships offered?

The goal of the NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program is to help students from disadvantaged backgrounds pursue educational and career opportunities in biomedical, behavioral and social science health-related research. The NIH is committed to training and nurturing new researchers and to alerting students to career possibilities in the field of biomedical research. This program focuses on individuals who may have had fewer opportunities than others to pursue research careers.

Biomedical research and the National Institutes of Health

The National Institutes of Health is the world's largest biomedical research institution and is the lead Federal agency responsible for basic and clinical research. The NIH has more than 1,000 laboratories on its 306-acre campus in Bethesda, Maryland—a suburb of Washington, DC. The NIH is staffed by more than 18,000 people, including nearly 4,000 researchers and health professionals with doctoral degrees. The NIH is also home to the Warren Grant Magnuson Clinical Center and the Mark O. Hatfield Clinical Research Center, which contain nearly half of all research hospital beds in the United States.

The NIH mission is to uncover new knowledge that will lead to better health for everyone. The NIH works toward that mission by conducting research in its own laboratories; supporting the research of non-Federal scientists in universities, medical schools, hospitals, and research institutions throughout the country and abroad; helping to train research investigators; and fostering the communication of biomedical information.

What are the benefits?

The NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program can award each student up to \$20,000 per academic year. This can be used for tuition, educational expenses such as books and laboratory fees, and reasonable living expenses. The scholarships are awarded for 1 year and may be renewed (no more than 4 years of scholarship support total). Actual award amounts are finalized between the UGSP and the financial aid office of each participant, after a review of financial need and all available aid. Your scholarship award cannot exceed your unmet college expenses. You should also contact your financial aid office to determine how an outside scholarship will affect your financial aid package. Students are required to file an

application for Federal aid by submitting a Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Applications can be accessed at <http://www.ed.gov>.

And the obligations?

Although the Undergraduate Scholarship Program carries service obligations to the NIH, the obligations themselves can be considered benefits—providing students with valuable research experience.

10-week summer laboratory experience.

After each year of the scholarship, each student is required to work for 10 weeks as a paid employee in an NIH research laboratory. This employment occurs during the summer after the receipt of the UGSP award. This service will be an opportunity for scholars to gain critical skills by working with experienced NIH researchers. Each scholar will be matched to an NIH researcher, who will serve as a mentor. Students will also attend formal seminars and participate in a variety of educational programs.

Employment at the NIH after graduation.

After graduation, scholarship recipients are required to serve as full-time employees in an NIH research laboratory. The obligation is 1 year (52 weeks) of full-time employment for each year of scholarship. *Students may defer service obligations for appropriate graduate or medical studies.*

Am I eligible?

The Undergraduate Scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis to students who show a commitment to pursuing a career in biomedical, behavioral or social science health-related research at the NIH.

The basic qualification requirements are as follows:

1. Have a grade point average of 3.5 (on a 4.0 scale) or be within the top 5 percent of your class.
2. Be from a disadvantaged background.*
3. Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a full-time student for the 2006–2007 academic year at an accredited, 4-year undergraduate institution.
4. Be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or qualified non-citizen of the United States. (See page 4 for more information.)

**Disadvantaged background* means that you come from a low-income family, as defined on page 5.

When are applications due?

Complete applications must be received by the NIH Undergraduate Scholarship Program Office by **February 28, 2006**. Applications should be mailed to:

National Institutes of Health
Office of Loan Repayment and Scholarship
2 Center Drive, Room 2E24 (MSC 0230)
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-0230

or can be completed online at:

<http://ugsp.info.nih.gov>

When will awards be made?

The NIH expects to award up to 15 scholarships by mid-July 2006.